

Opportunity to Hit the Reset Button

The Coronavirus has shut down the world, with many dominoes falling just in the last few days. Not only are favorite sporting events cancelled but many municipalities are cancelling most meetings and recommending that any community event or activity involving 100 or more people be cancelled. Today we are still at the beginning of the pandemic with many communities recommending that even public worship services not be held. For many of us that is a big change. Our “comfort zone” was to sit in the pews on a consistent basis, even if on “auto pilot.” Now, even that is temporarily taken away.



It is as if our world has hit the reset button. The world, as we know it, is already in a “pause” mode. It won’t take us long to merely fill in the time so we can say, “We’re busy.” Why not take this opportunity to make our time more meaningful?

Is our attendance at church truly for worship? If worship is a priority will we take advantage of the on-line options provided by our local churches or on the internet? The new comfort zone being offered allows us to pursue our spiritual growth and worship in other ways, now that the routine worship is not currently available.

We have all heard the concept that God can work something good out of every bad situation. *And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose (Romans 8:28).* The coronavirus is causing a bad situation, but a positive spin-off of it is that many people may seek additional ways to worship now that our routine worship is temporarily not available. When churches begin to hold public worship again we will have the opportunity to strengthen our faith through communal worship and also maintain the new attempts at personal worship.

One of the common excuses for not doing something is we don’t have the time. With the cancellation of most activities we have been given the gift of time. For the time being we aren’t glued to televised sports. Our evenings are generally freed up from various meetings. So, we now have the opportunity to redistribute our time. Never before has this opportunity been presented to us in such a broad way.

The big disappointment will be if people take sick days from their worship, using the coronavirus as an excuse. I pray that Sunday worship is meaningful to you and not just an activity on your calendar. What are you going to do with this opportunity? God gives us this opportunity and additional time for our own Bible study. You can Google “Lenten devotions” for timely messages on-line. When I typed that into my search engine the top of the list was “Lenten Devotions by Billy Graham.” That is a great start. Devotionals specific to church denominations are available if you want to study writings consistent with the teachings of your own church. Perhaps your pastor is delivering the weekly sermon on-line. The possibilities are seemingly endless because of the internet. Secondly, I bet that your home has multiple copies of the Bible. Take this opportunity to begin a reading plan. Take a book of the Bible and read it completely. You can find study guides that help you understand the context of your reading. Our church is doing a daily reading of the book of Mark, the shortest of the gospels. In place of public worship this is a great opportunity to read a larger section of the Bible. Without daily TV watching consider substituting readings into a new daily routine. Devotionals give nice stories with biblical applications but there is nothing better than reading the Word of God directly.

Take the initiative. Create a new way of growing in your faith. For the time being you don’t have live sports to compete for your attention. This is an opportunity to step up your game with new priorities. Then, when church is meeting again, keep the new ways as an enhancement to make public worship more meaningful. Instead of viewing this pandemic as a total loss, see what you can gain from the situation. Press the reset button!

Question: What adjustments are you making to your worship life during this coronavirus shutdown?

Prayer: Dear Lord. This is not an easy time as many of the activities we enjoy are taken away from us. But, we realize this is an opportunity to enhance our worship life in new ways. We pray we can do that. Amen.